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NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Amy Brown, festival coordinator, 243-6880.

BUDDY DEFRANCO WILL HEADLINE JAZZ FESTIVAL

MISSOULA—

Jazz legend and part-time Montana resident Buddy DeFranco will lend his name and considerable talent to The University of Montana's annual jazz festival.

The Buddy DeFranco Jazz Festival will be held Friday, April 21, and Saturday, April 22, in the University Theatre. A noncompetitive, educational event, the festival gathers high school and college jazz bands for judged performances, clinics and evening concerts.

DeFranco will join guest artists and clinicians Peter Erskine, Bill Prince, Dave Eshelman, Terry Gibbs, Tom Ranier, Clipper Anderson and Robert LedBetter at the festival, which runs from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Erskine and Ranier will present Friday's clinic, while DeFranco and Gibbs offer Saturday's clinic. Both begin at 1 p.m. and the public is invited to watch at no charge.

Evening concerts, beginning at 7:30 p.m., will feature Erskine, Ranier and Prince on Friday, with DeFranco, Gibbs and Ranier performing Saturday night. Tickets are \$15 for reserved seats and \$12 for students and seniors; both concerts may be attended for \$25 reserved and \$20 students/seniors. Tickets are available at all Tic-It-E-Z outlets or by calling (888) MONTANA.

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Dubbed “the Charlie Parker of the clarinet,” DeFranco has recorded more than 150 albums during a career that spans seven decades, making him the most recorded modern jazz clarinetist since the Swing Era. He is credited with leading the way for jazz clarinetists from swing to bop, while setting a standard of technical brilliance. DeFranco also has played with greats like Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, Tony Bennett, Billie Holiday, Nat Cole, Mel Torme and Dizzy Gillespie. He was a member of the Count Basie Septet and, from 1966 to 1974, leader of the Glenn Miller Orchestra.

DeFranco has won 20 Downbeat Magazine Awards, nine Metronome Magazine Awards and 16 Playboy All-Stars awards, and in 1998, he was nominated for a Grammy Award as best soloist. He is a part-time resident of Whitefish. For more information, visit his Web site at <http://www.buddydefranco.com/>.

“Buddy is a world-class clarinetist whose many years of dedication to jazz make him without equal among living jazz artists of today,” said music Professor Lance Boyd. “His role with the jazz festival is an acknowledgment of the viability of jazz education and gives our program a real boost.”

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